

Gislingham Ward
Mellis, Gislingham, Thornham Parva, Thornham Magna, Wortham & Burgate,
Wickham Skeith.
District Councillor Report

January 2026

Mayoral elections postponed	The Mayoral elections will be postponed until May 2028, and that means they will probably be held under a Supplementary Vote System rather than First past the Post.
LGR updates	We are expecting the Government to publicise the final decision by March 2026.
SCC' response to Government regarding cancelling SCC elections	Following Council and Cabinet Meetings Monday 12 th January, the council leader Mathew Hicks has responded to the government request regarding the possible cancelling of the May 26 County Council elections detailing the capacity issues resulting from LGR, managing current high levels of demand and the possible election of a new administration, summing up: "Therefore, in accordance with that decision, I submit this letter giving the view that postponing the May 2026 elections would release essential capacity to deliver Local Government Reorganisation effectively."
Social housing and homelessness	At present there are 961 active applicants for a council house in Mid Suffolk. Over 50% are already in some form of rented accommodation. Mid Suffolk has prevented 462 cases of homelessness and has provided accommodation for 292 cases of homelessness 2025/6, 25% families with children a small decline from 2024/25. 147 cases have been resolved. At present there are 33 households in temporary accommodation and 26 in B&B. A budget has been allocated to help bring empty homes back into use, last year 99 homes were brought back into use. There are currently 194 cases. The HRA Tam has caught up with work to bring homes in line with current regulations regarding fire, water, gas, electric, all 100% and all 73 reported cases of damp and mould have been investigated and mould removed, remedial works are being carried out on 72 properties.
Essex and Suffolk Water consultation on major new water projects for the Eye area	<p>Essex and Suffolk Water has launched a consultation on its plans to build new reservoirs, treatment plants, and install new pipelines, across northern Suffolk. The project is intended to tackle the growing water shortage in our area.</p> <p>Water recycling plant near Lowestoft, Clean water released into R Waveney to be pumped out at the existing Barsham Works, pumped to new reservoirs and Sizewell C.</p> <p>Potential sites for a partially underground reservoir are being considered at Thrandeston and Eye airfield.</p> <p>As this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), the government will have the final say on this project (not the local planning authority). MSDC is responding to this non statutory consultation.</p> <p>Essex and Suffolk Water held drop-in events in Eye Community Centre on Nov 12th and Thrandeston Dec. 3rd. Link: https://northsuffolkreservoir.co.uk/</p>

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Biodiversity and Nature Recovery	<p>At its November meeting, Mid Suffolk District Council approved a package of funding of £1.8m over the next three years for nature recovery and biodiversity. The funding will be used to carry out the plans of the cross-party biodiversity working group, as well as meeting government proposals for biodiversity and nature recovery.</p> <p>Around half of the funding is going towards a new community Nature Recovery Grant fund. The fund will be split equally between both community-led projects and projects for the restoration of rivers and their catchments. The funds will support communities to create and manage habitat and nature recovery schemes, including natural flood management.</p> <p>For more on the new funding see: £2 million for Mid Suffolk biodiversity and nature recovery - Mid Suffolk District Council - babergh.gov.uk / midsuffolk.gov.uk The action plan can be found here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-action-plan</p>
Armed Forces Day Saturday, 27th June, 2026	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council would be leading Armed Forces Day in Suffolk in 2026, and the event would be held in Stowmarket. Stowmarket Town Council has resolved to support to the District Council in hosting Armed Forces Day in the town.</p>
New Youth Council for Mid Suffolk	<p>The November Council meeting agreed unanimously to set up a new Youth Council for Mid Suffolk. The Youth Council aims to provide an avenue for young people to have their views heard, and to enable young people to better understand and engage with the political process. It is hoped the Youth Council will be operating by September 2026, the beginning of the next school year</p>
Funding	<p>Sustainable Communities Food fund: Our Sustainable Communities Food Fund provides grants to small scale food initiatives such as community pantries, fridges and food pop-ups.</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>The Councils vision is to build 'great communities with bright and healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home'. Wellbeing is one of six key priorities to help deliver this vision. For example Dance East has received funding for its dementia support classes.</p>
Council Grants	<p>For information on Mid Suffolk council grants available to support community projects and organisations, please see: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-funding or email BMSDCgrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk for advice on funding options.ny requests for funding must be completed by Jan 2026 so if you have a project that you feel would qualify for funding please contact me.</p> <p>Further information on Locality Grants: https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/locality-awards</p>

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